THAMES VALLEY

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

SERVICES

Land adjacent to Bramley Cottage, Milton Hill, Oxfordshire

Archaeological Evaluation

by Steve Ford

Site Code: BCM 17/89

(SU 4803 9080)

Land adjacent to Bramley Cottage, Milton Hill, Oxfordshire

An Archaeological Evaluation

for Anderson Orr Architects

by Steve Ford

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code BCM 17/89

September 2017

Summary

Site name: Land adjacent to Bramley Cottage, Milton Hill, Oxfordshire

Grid reference: SU 4803 9080

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 25th - 26th September 2017

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Steve Ford

Site code: BCM 17/89

Area of site: *c*. 0.27ha

Summary of results: The evaluation was carried out as intended and in total, five trenches were excavated covering the areas of proposed development. However, these revealed no deposits nor artefacts of archaeological interest and it is considered that the site has no archaeological potential.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Oxfordshire Museum Service in due course.

Report edited/checked by:	Steve Preston✓ 29.09.17

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Land adjacent to Bramley Cottage, Milton Hill, Oxfordshire
An Archaeological Evaluation

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Report 17/89

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out on land adjacent to Bramley Cottage, Milton Hill, Oxfordshire (SU 4803 9080) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Richard Anderson of Anderson Orr Architects, The Studio, 70 Church Road, Wheatley, Oxford OX33 1LZ.

Planning permission (app no P17/V1888/FUL) has been sought from Vale of White Horse District Council to erect new housing on the site along with associated works. As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on the site which may be damaged or destroyed by groundworks, a field evaluation has been requested in order to inform the planning process. This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012), and the District Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification agreed by Mr Hugh Coddington of Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services, advising the District.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Steve Ford and Dan Haddad on 25th - 26th September 2017 2017 and the site code is BCM17/89. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Oxfordshire Museum Service in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The proposed development site is located adjacent to Bramley Cottage in Milton Hill, near Didcot, Oxfordshire (Fig. 1). The site consists of a sub-rectangular plot of pasture, fenced, and some hard standing (Fig. 2). The proposal site lies at a height of approximately 88m above Ordnance Datum, rising very gently to the west. The underlying geology is recorded as Upper Greensand but possibly with head and younger coombe deposits above it (BGS 1971). A grey sandy clay with some greeensand was observed in the trenches.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been previously highlighted in a brief for the project prepared by Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services, drawing on the results of a desk-based assessment (McNamara 2017). In summary there are no known archaeological deposits on the site itself but the site lies in a zone where

recent fieldwork, namely the monitoring of a water pipeline (Hart 2012) and evaluation have revealed prehistoric and Roman occupation. Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman occupation is recorded to the north-west, with further Roman deposits found by evaluation to the east (Moore 2017).

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within the area of development. All works were to be carried out in such a manner as would not compromise the integrity of the archaeological features or deposits that would be best suited for investigation under conditions pertaining to full excavation.

Specific aims were:

to determine if archaeological deposits of any period were present; and

to provide information to allow the preparation of a mitigation strategy if necessary.

Five trenches were to be dug, each 1.6m wide and 25m long (Fig. 3). The trenches were to be dug using a JCB-type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. Any features uncovered were to be cleaned, excavated and recorded using the appropriate hand tools.

Results

All five trenches were dug as intended (Fig. 3) and ranged between 22.6m and 27.2m long, and 0.40m to 0.56m deep. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (Fig. 3; Pl. 1)

Trench 1 was aligned roughly W - E and was 26.1m long and up to 0.47m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.3m of turf and topsoil above 0.17m of grey sandy clay subsoil (more silty to the west) overlying grey sandy clay with greensand fragments comprising the natural geology. No finds were recovered and no archaeological deposits were encountered.

Trench 2 (Figs 3 and 4; Pl. 3)

Trench 2 was aligned WSW-ENE and was 24m long and up to 0.48m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.3m of turf and topsoil above 0.18m of subsoil overlying grey sandy clay with greensand fragments (natural geology). No finds were recovered and no archaeological deposits were encountered.

Trench 3 (Fig. 3; Pl. 2)

This trench was aligned roughly S-N and was 23.3m long and 0.45m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.23m of turf/topsoil and 0.07m of subsoil overlying natural geology. The southern end from 1m to 3m was occupied by a modern pit used for burning rubbish. No finds were recovered and no archaeological deposits were encountered.

Trench 4 (Figs 3 and 4)

Trench 4 was aligned NW-SE and was 27.2m long and between 0.4–0.56m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.23m of turf/topsoil and 0.17m of subsoil overlying natural geology. The subsoil was more silty to the north-west. A number of ceramic land drains were noted and a few finds of clay pipe, and late post-medieval pottery and brick/tile were observed on the spoilheaps.

Trench 5 (Fig. 3; Pl. 4)

Trench 5 was aligned W-E and was 22.6m long and 0.40–0.45m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.23m of turf/ topsoil and 073m of subsoil overlying natural geology. A test pit was dug to a depth of 0.7m at the west end to confirm interpretation of the geology. No archaeological deposits were observed and no finds were recovered.

Conclusion

The evaluation was carried out as intended with five trenches dug. However, these revealed no deposits nor artefacts of archaeological interest. On the basis of these resutls, the site is considered to have no archaeological potential.

References

BGS, 1971, *British Geological Survey*, Sheet 253 1.50 000 drift edition

Hart, J, McSloy, E R and Alexander M, 2012, 'The archaeology of the Cleeve to Fyfield water main, South Oxfordshire: excavations in 2006-7', *Oxoniensia,* **77**, 199–266

McNamara, M, 2017, 'Land adjacent to Bramley Cottage, Milton Hill, Oxfordshire, an archaeological desk-based assessment', Thames Valley Archaeological Services unpubl rep **17/89**, Reading

Moore, J, 2017, 'An Archaeological Evaluation at Milton Heights, Milton, Oxfordshire', John Moore Heritage Services unpubl rep, Beckley

NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London

APPENDIX 1: Trench details

Trench	*Length (m)*	*Breadth (m)*	*Depth (m)*	*Comment*
1	26.1	1.6	0.44- 0.47	0–0.3m Turf/topsoil, 0.3-0.4m grey silty clay subsoil, 0.4m+ grey sandy clay with some greensand fragments (natural geology). **[Pl. 1]**
2	24.0	1.6	0.48	0–0.3m Turf/topsoil, 0.3-0.48m grey sandy clay subsoil, 0.48m+ grey sandy clay with some greensand fragments (natural geology). **[Pl. 3]**
3	23.3	1.6	0.4- 0.45	0–0.23m Turf/topsoil, 0.23-0.3m grey silty clay subsoil, 0.3m+ grey sandy clay with some greensand fragments (natural geology). Modern burnt pit at south end **[Pl. 2]**
4	27.2	1.6	0.4- 0.56	0–0.23m Turf/topsoil, 0.23-0.4m grey silty clay subsoil, 0.4m+ grey sandy clay with some greensand fragments (natural geology).
5	22.6	1.6	0.4-0.45 0.68 TP	0–0.3m Turf/topsoil, 0.3-0.4m grey silty clay subsoil, 0.4m+ grey sandy clay with some greensand fragments (natural geology). Test pit at 0.6-2m to 0.68m. **[Pl. 4]**

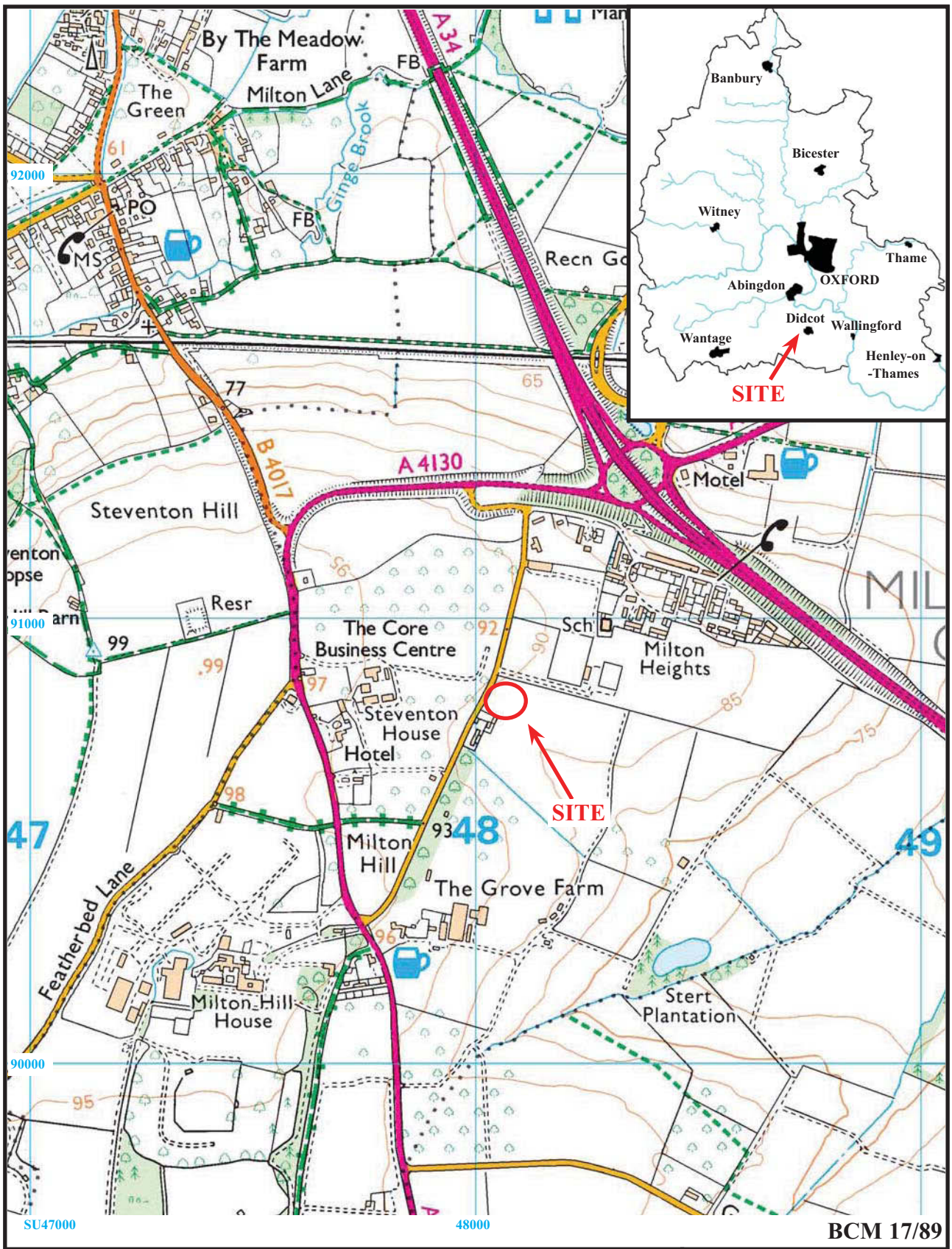

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Figure 1. Location of site within Milton Hill and Oxfordshire.

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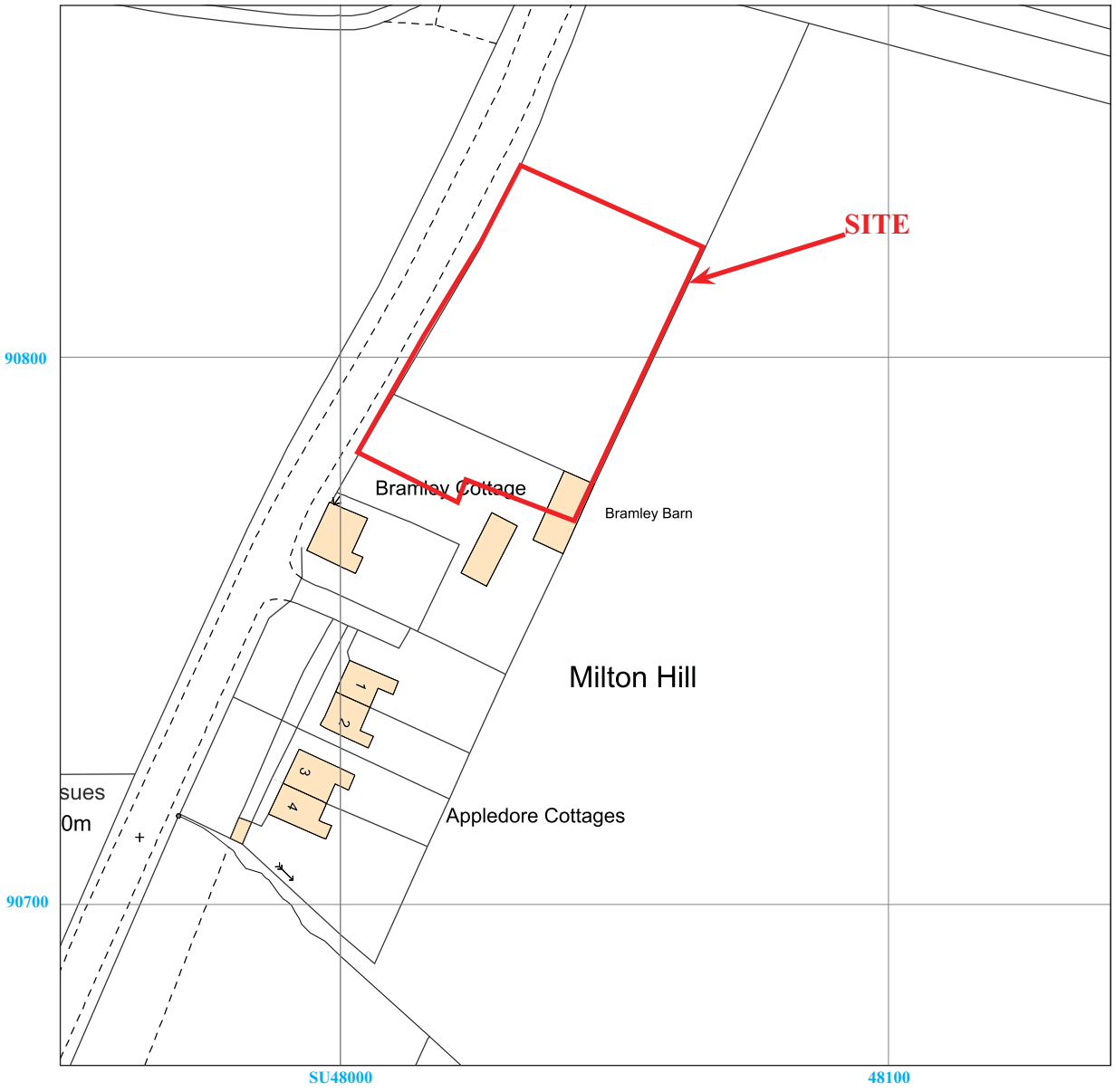

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Figure 2. Detailed location of site.

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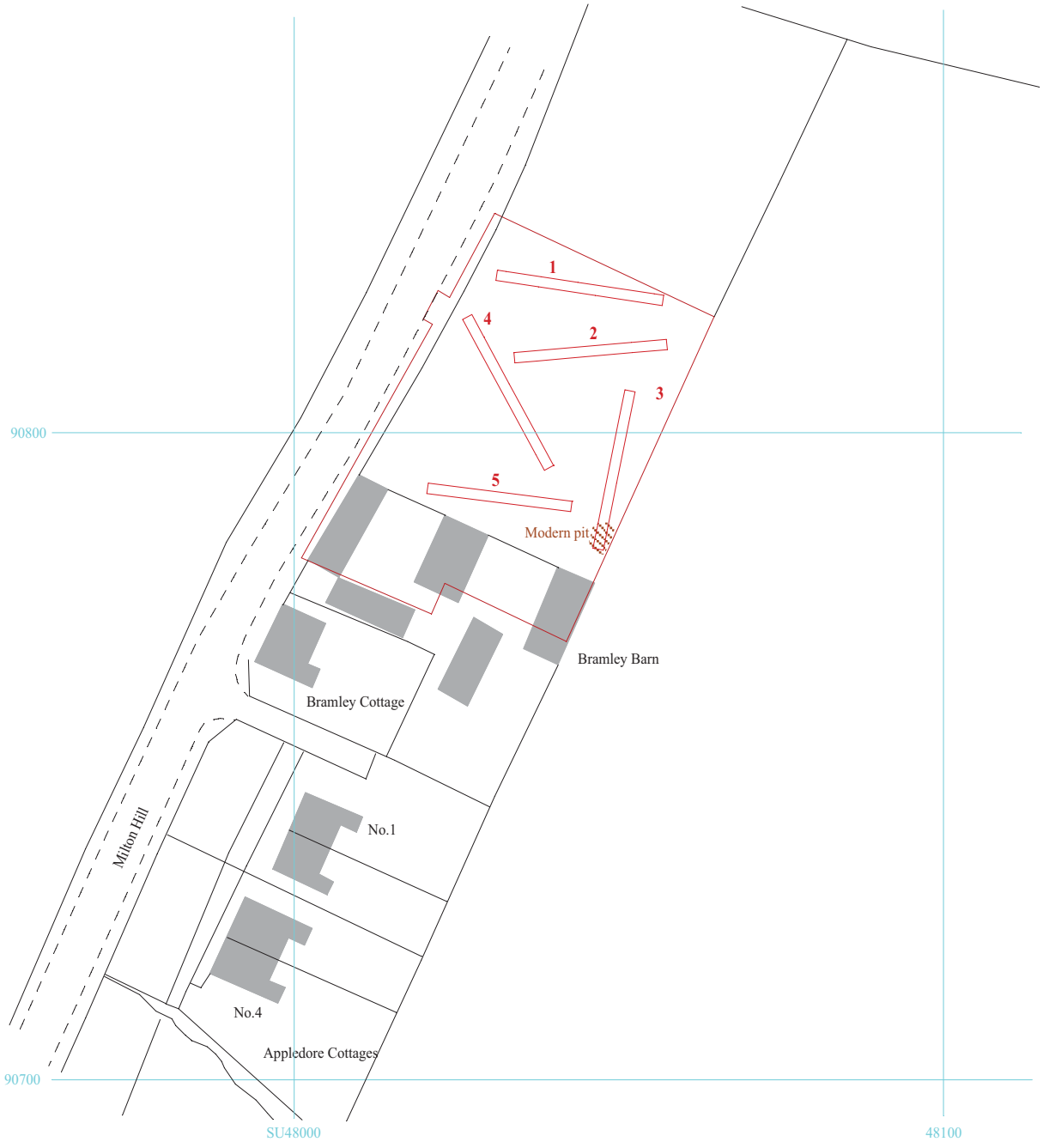

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Figure 3. Location of trenches.

0 50m

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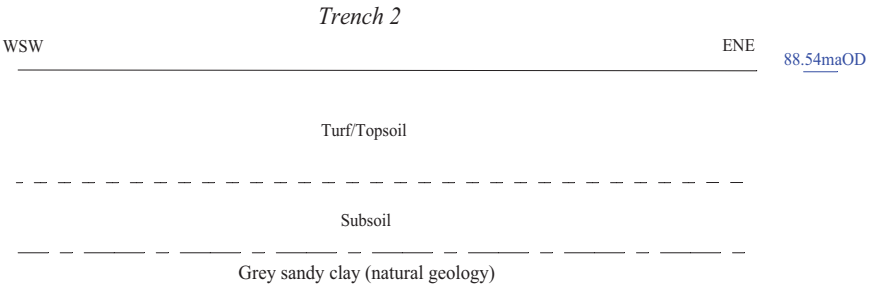

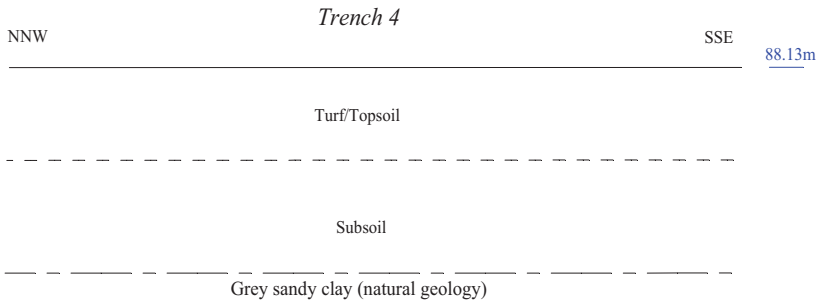

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Figure 4. Representative sections.

0 1m

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Plate 1. Trench 1, looking north west, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.

Plate 2. Trench 3, looking south east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.

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Plates 1 and 2.

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Plate 3. Trench 2, looking south-west, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.

Plate 4. Trench 5, looking east, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.

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Land adjacent to Bramley Cottage, Milton Hill, Didicot, Oxfordshire, 2017
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Plates 3 and 4.

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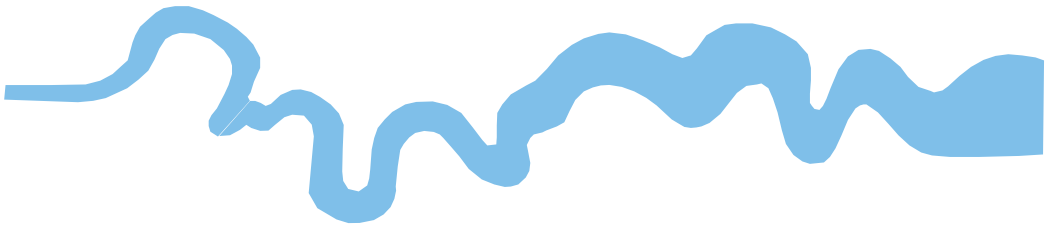
TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern	AD 1901
Victorian	AD 1837
Post Medieval	AD 1500
Medieval	AD 1066
Saxon	AD 410
Roman	AD 43
	AD 0 BC
Iron Age	750 BC
Bronze Age: Late	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower	2,000,000 BC



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